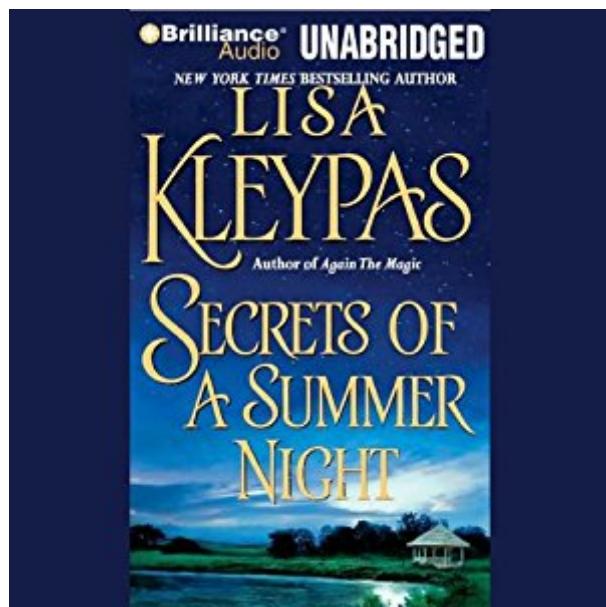


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Secrets Of A Summer Night: The Wallflowers, Book 1



Synopsis

Four young ladies enter London society with one common goal: they must use their feminine wit and wiles to find a husband. So a daring husband-hunting scheme is born. Annabelle Peyton, determined to save her family from disaster, decides to use her beauty and wit to tempt a suitable nobleman into making an offer of marriage. But Annabelle's most intriguing - and persistent - admirer, wealthy, powerful Simon Hunt, has made it clear that while he will introduce her to irresistible pleasure, he will not offer marriage. Annabelle is determined to resist his unthinkable proposition...but it is impossible in the face of such skillful seduction. Her friends, looking to help, conspire to entice a more suitable gentleman to offer for Annabelle, for only then will she be safe from Simon - and her own longings. But on one summer night, Annabelle succumbs to Simon's passionate embrace and tempting kisses...and she discovers that love is the most dangerous game of all.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Simon Hunt is a self made millionaire. But his millions can't buy him a place in the upper tiers of British society. He, and the growing number of self made commoners, are looked down upon by the aristocracy and thought of as opportunists and social climbers. Simon is only barely tolerated in "polite" society because of his friendship with the estimable Lord Westcliff (the hero of the next book in the series) and because the crumbling aristocracy can't ignore his millions try as they might. Simon doesn't care less about his pariah status in the upper circles since he disdains their boring parties and inane conversation. Only one thing keeps Simon from swearing off balls and soirees

altogether and her name is Annabelle Peyton. Annabelle and her family are in desperate straits. They are living in genteel poverty and desperately trying to keep head above water. The obvious solution out of their predicament is for Annabelle to marry a peer, however, her chances of getting a proposal are virtually zero due to her lack of a dowry. As her fourth season draws to a close, Annabelle knows that it has to be now or never. To that end, she meets a group of fellow wallflowers and they strike up a friendship centered around their immediate need to catch husbands. They concoct a plan to help Annabelle trap a peer into marriage during a house party. But Annabelle's confidence and her plans are shaken by the presence of Simon Hunt. Annabelle can't forget the day she allowed him to kiss her and she can't forgive him for making her like it. Simon makes it clear that he has only wanted one thing from Annabelle ever since that day and she will not yield regardless of his wealth or his handsome looks.

I'm new to the romance genre, and I hadn't found any books that really got me into it. I was close to giving up, when I read "Secrets of a Summer Night." "Secrets of a Summer Night" was utterly different from the other romance novels I'd tried to read. From what I gathered (and I'm still new to romances, so perhaps my perception is a bit off) the average romance novel consists of this perfect heroine--idealistic, spunky, good, honest...and of course, beautiful. And she and the dashing hero meet, but they can't be together for some reason. So the whole book is centered on the fight between their lust, and the thing that's keeping them apart. And then, it's magically resolved, they marry, and ride off into the sunset. This novel still has some of the same things--Annabelle the heroine is, of course, still beautiful. However, she's not at all goody-goody or idealistic. Financially hard times have made her guarded and materialistic, and she has a woefully close-minded view of the world. Having such flaws, however, actually makes her seem more realistic than the average heroine. The other thing I've hated about romance novels is how the hero and heroine meet each other, and next thing you know, they're professing their undying love. How often does that happen in real life? Kleypas doesn't do this here. Where most books end with the happy marriage, the author takes it further. It's clear that when they marry, it's probably more out of lust and the beginnings of love. They barely know each other. Annabelle even acknowledges it to herself shortly after she and Simon marry--she hardly knows him, she doesn't have a clear idea what he does for work, and she didn't even have any idea where he lived!

Set in Victorian England, the Wallflower series is the story of four young ladies who join forces to help each other find suitable husbands. This is the story of Annabelle Peyton. Beautiful and witty,

Annabelle could easily ensnare herself a husband--if not for her lack of dowry. Left impoverished after her father's death, she's in her third season with no marriage proposal to come. Then she meets one of England's wealthiest men... except he's not from polite society. Despite the wealth he has amassed over the years, Simon Hunt is barely tolerated by the upper class. If not for his friendship with the Earl of Westcliff, one of England's most influential men, no one would dare associate with him. Knowing Annabelle's impoverished state, he decides to pursue her with the intention of making her his mistress. But then lust turns into something deeper until he finds himself falling in love with Annabelle. But how does he convince someone from genteel society to step down and marry a butcher's son? *SECRETS OF A SUMMER NIGHT* is a delightful story of romance and friendship. Kleypas has captured the Victorian era as seen in the eyes of the main characters. Annabelle's struggles in finding a husband and the stigma of Simon's background are real depiction of the times. It is true that our heroine comes across as real snooty when we meet her, but I suppose that's how the author wanted to portray her to lend more drama to the ending (I won't say what she does or it will ruin the story). Simon is, of course, classically portrayed as a self-made man, though not quite in the same league as Derek Craven (*DREAMING OF YOU*). I felt that the author could have done better in developing these two; however, I must say that their verbal sparring provided much amusement.

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